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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**55th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2022**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<u>HB166</u>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<u>Romero, GA</u>
<b>Tracking Number</b>	<u>.222133.2</u>	<b>Committee Referrals</b>	<u>HEC/HAFC</u>
<b>Short Title</b>	<u>Web-Based At-Risk Student Resource Tool</u>		
<b>Analyst</b>	<u>Estupiñan</u>	<b>Original Date</b>	<u>2/1/2022</u>
		<b>Last Updated</b>	<u></u>

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**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 166 (HB166) amends the Public School Code to require the creation of a web-based resource tool that provides resources for at-risk students. The tool should be developed in consultation with the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) and LESC, and may include:

- Information on education programs focused on the needs of at-risk students;
- Modules, interventions, and educational approaches that are responsive to the needs of at-risk students;
- Information on local and regional educational experts.

An advisory group would be convened that is inclusive of relevant stakeholders to collaborate with Public Education Department (PED) in recommending content for the portal. Further, each of those stakeholders would also have an opportunity to serve as a regional point of contact for those who wish to submit content recommendations for the website.

PED will also be required to hire a full-time employee to oversee and maintain the at-risk web-based tool.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill appropriates \$250 thousand from the general fund to PED for expenditure in FY23. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY23 shall revert to the general fund.

**SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

While there is significant research and online content on the most appropriate methods for meeting the needs of at-risk students, much of that content lacks the cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic context of New Mexico. Building a central database where scholars, policymakers, and other stakeholders can collaborate in creating a comprehensive source of relevant data and research is

critical in ensuring new and ongoing programs and initiatives are effective, cost-effective, and scalable.

Creating an advisory board to solicit and screen potential content also promotes greater inclusivity and transparency by partially removing PED staff from the process of making those content determinations. Further, it assists in building partnerships across policy areas, where advocates for special education may have an opportunity to collaborate with those for bilingual and multicultural education programs. Thereby helping stakeholders to recognize the relationships between policy areas and how collaboration can help in empowering students with multiple identities.

Reflective of the court’s decision in the *Martinez-Yazzie* education sufficiency lawsuit, the bill defines “at-risk students” as those four student groups named in the lawsuit: low-income students, English-Language Learners, special education students and Native American students.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

HB166 would require staff time and resources at PED, LFC, and the LESC.

## **OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

While ensuring diverse representation on the advisory board is critical in providing a comprehensive overview of relevant policy areas, the bill does not provide guidance that promotes racial and ethnic diversity, socioeconomic diversity, and diversity of lived experience and that of member’s educational and career backgrounds.

Lack of clarity in the expectations for the makeup of the advisory board may lead to a situation where many of its members originate from one part of the state, do not reflect the identities of the students they strive to empower, or whose careers and experience focus on a narrow range of policy areas.

Further, the bill specifies that the advisory board will consist of stakeholders who represent “educational organizations.” This language may prevent experienced and passionate activists who are not affiliated with an established or well-known organization from serving on the advisory council. If that language persists, the voices and perspectives on the advisory council may lean toward established organizations that often already play a leading role in shaping education policy throughout the state.

## **RELATED BILLS**

HB165 - Web-Based Native American Student Tool

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files

**DE/abc/mb**